

## Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (C2E2)

Summary of November 18, 2024

### Virtual Meeting

**Members Virtual:** Cindy Lewin (Chair), Joan McIntyre (vice-chair), Mikaila Milton, Rob Sandoli, Doug Snoeyenbos, Kevin Vincent, Joe Trivette, Elizabeth Whitney, Melissa Benn, Alex Rough, Mark Greenwood, Trevor Montano, Jonathan Morgenstein

**Members Absent:** Majdi Shomali

**Staff Virtual:** Jenna Peabody (DES-AIRE), Demetra McBride (DES-OSEM), Rich Dooley (CPO), Jennifer Fiorreti (CPO), Paul Roman (DES-AIRE)

**Non-members Virtual:** Scott Dicke, Jamie Kern, Lisa Marcellus

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### **Introduction and Public Comment**

Jamie Kern made a public comment. He noted that he has applied to be a member of C2E2. He announced that the EU delegation in DC would soon launch a transatlantic program to partner US and European sub-national governments for energy-efficient building renovations. He hoped Arlington would join this fully funded, multi-year exchange to advance energy-efficient innovations and emissions reductions. He suggested Arlington collaborate with other Northern Virginia counties to avoid competition and promote high standards in emissions and energy reductions. Jamie also proposed a regional branding initiative to highlight Northern Virginia's commitment to energy efficiency, suggesting a name like "supernova" as a brand.

### **Master Transportation Plan Update – Joan McIntyre**

Joan McIntyre explained that the county was updating its master transportation plan and had completed public engagement. She serves on the advisory committee and noted that each commission was asked to provide their priorities for the plan. The focus was on consolidating multiple plans into one framework to address various transportation needs.

Joan emphasized the need for the plan to include targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with the county's decarbonization goals. She suggested making the plan quantitative and measurable, with a shift towards electric transportation. Joan also highlighted the importance of regional collaboration and flexibility in transportation options, such as using smaller buses and improving walkability and bikeability. She mentioned the challenges of biking in Arlington and the need for better integration of different transportation modes, including scooters and e-bikes.

Joan McIntyre noted the potential for reducing parking availability to encourage the use of alternative transportation options. She suggested that scooters and bikes should be in protected bike lanes for safety. Kevin Vincent emphasized the need to make trails safe for all users to maximize non-emitting forms of transportation.

Rob Sandoli raised a question about measuring vehicle miles traveled, and Joan explained that the county had methods to gather this data. Demetra McBride added that modeling would be completed by January. Joan also mentioned the importance of decarbonization and the need for funding and behavior change to achieve ambitious transportation goals. Cindy Lewin thanked Joan for her efforts and highlighted the significance of the master transportation plan.

## **October Meeting Summary for Approval**

Kevin Vincent moved to approve the October meeting notes, and Joan McIntyre seconded. Cindy noted a new rule requiring commissioners to keep their cameras on for attendance to count.

## **Barcroft Apartments Development – Letter for Approval**

The group discussed the Barcroft letter, with Rob Sandoli suggesting the importance of maintaining the building's resilience. Joan McIntyre clarified the previous microgrid setup and its limitations. Demetra McBride emphasized the need for cleaner backup generation for public health benefits. The group agreed to approve the letter with amendments to address these points.

Joan McIntyre and Cindy Lewin discussed the importance of maintaining historic preservation elements while enhancing building efficiency. Kevin Vincent moved to approve the letter, and Rob Sandoli seconded. The motion passed with no objections or abstentions.

## **C2E2's SPRC Checklist: Analysis and Potential Updating– Mark Greenwood**

Mark Greenwood then began his presentation on the methodology for the SPRC checklist, explaining the categories and subcategories used to rate site performance. He highlighted the importance of weighting factors and the potential need for adjustments to ensure a balanced evaluation. The discussion also touched on the possibility of adding new subcategories and the impact on overall scores. Cindy emphasized the need to update the checklist in line with new green building policies.

Mark Greenwood and Kevin Vincent discussed the importance of concrete criteria in the evaluation process, with Kevin expressing concern about criteria that could be manipulated by hiring good lawyers. Mark agreed and suggested that some subcategories, which involve drafting documents without producing tangible results, might need removal or require associated action items.

Doug Snoeyenbos praised Mark's analytical work and suggested that improvements to the score sheet should not be delayed by the green building incentive program's timeline. Jonathan Morgenstein acknowledged the need for improvements but noted that the current system was developed through extensive iterations to ensure objectivity. He highlighted the challenges in creating a fair and consistent evaluation process and mentioned past discussions on improving DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) criteria.

Mark Greenwood and Jonathan Morgenstein discussed the importance of not duplicating criteria from the Green Building Incentive Program (GBIP) in their scorecard. Mark highlighted the issue of redundancy, such as requiring compliance with state law, which is already checked by county staff. Cindy Lewin emphasized the value of the current scorecard, noting its objectivity and the significant effort put into its development.

Joan McIntyre suggested defining key sustainability criteria for buildings and collaborating with other commissions to create a unified approach. Cindy agreed and encouraged further updates to the scorecard, inviting interested members to participate in the process.

## **Green Building Incentive Program – Letter for Approval**

The conversation then shifted to discussing the green building policy letter, focusing on whether new constructions and adaptive reuse projects should be fully electric.

Joan McIntyre emphasized the need for full electrification in new and adaptive reuse buildings to meet carbon neutrality goals. She noted that even retail spaces can be all-electric, as seen in Amazon's projects. Jonathan Morgenstein raised concerns about incentivizing developers, suggesting non-monetary incentives like promoting fully electric buildings. Melissa

Benn supported full electrification but agreed that gas backup generators for resiliency are reasonable.

Rob Sandoli stressed the importance of developer feedback to ensure the policy is practical and effective. Joe Trivette argued that a 2/3 success rate for the current policy is good and supported full electrification with an exception for backup generators. Demetra McBride and Paul Roman highlighted resistance from developers regarding electrification, noting the importance of efficient building systems and the challenges posed by the grid's carbon footprint. Jonathan countered that the grid is becoming cleaner, making full electrification a viable goal.

Demetra McBride and Jonathan Morgenstein discussed the challenges of meeting renewable portfolio standards (RPS) and the increasing energy demand due to data centers in Virginia. Kevin Vincent raised a question about geothermal energy and its inclusion in electrification, which was clarified as part of electrification since it uses electricity for heat transfer.

The group reviewed the letter supporting electrification in new and adaptive reuse buildings, with some exceptions for backup generators. Doug Snoeyenbos raised a concern about a sentence in the letter, which was addressed by Joan McIntyre. The letter was approved with no objections.

## **Updates**

Joe Trivette reported on the River House SPRC meeting, noting high attendance and passionate arguments. Doug provided updates from the Energy Committee, including EV charging infrastructure and a potential climate resolution by the County Board. Demetra confirmed that the C-PACE update was adopted by the board. The Solid Waste Committee is set to meet again, and Demetra provided an update on staff transition plans. She provided an update on the transition process, noting that her replacement's advertisement has been posted, but reviews will likely start early next year. She mentioned a summary of projects and initiatives that need attention. Cindy Lewin appreciated Demetra's efforts and acknowledged the challenges ahead.

Joan McIntyre noted that the deer management ordinance passed, and she testified on both deer management and legislative priorities. Alex Rough, a new commissioner, introduced himself, highlighting his background in environmental activism and data centers.